



Off east coast of Africa. Longitude 23. Latitude, 4, 11, 44.

At last we are here! Slipped away from the steamer disguised as a bale of red flannel undergarments for the heathen in order to evade the scrutiny of a suspicious-looking steamer which I think carries World and Journal reporters. Good old Tom Corker of the Rough Riders, who fears nothing living except his wife, is acting as boatman. Am now at the threshold of the Dark Continent.

While surveying the shore for a proper landing-place have overhauled our equipment and find have forgotten my pocket-dictionary. Also pocket magneto for wireless outfit. Also my contracts with magazine syndicate.

Also bottle of fly-disturber for insects. Also safety razor.

As we near the low, forbidding shore we sight three large, open-faced lions who make a noise like a welcome. Remembering that the lion is markedly averse to getting his fet wet, order Tom to approach as near as the surf will permit. Will have my first opportunity to study the genus Fells at close range. These lions are ripping specimens. Very nervous and feverish, with bully sets of teeth. Nothing like specimens hitherto studied in the zoo. They roar just like Tillman when he is making a speech.

Looks as if the lions mean to stay on the job. Tom has rowed three miles. Steamer is signaling us to shoot the lions and go ashore, but we

can't find the explosive bullets for the lion gun. From my repeated and careful observations of these animals in captivity I never formed the least estimate of their strenuousity and devilish perniciousness. Extremely undesirable citizens, indeed! I calculate that a man weighing 200 pounds would last them just about 20 seconds if they all tackled him at once. Wish I had a fat reporter or a trust magnate to throw to them and distract their attention.

Steamer signals that she won't wait any longer as mail regulations will not permit further delay. Tom too tired to row back so we will keep on down the coast as the lions appear to be getting impatient and show symptoms of an intention to swim out. I do not recall having read in any of the natural histories whether the lion can swim or not, but these creatures look as though they could do almost

anything. One of them is a particularly low-browed and repulsive thing with an overshot jaw and bloodshot eyes, and with the energy of a 60 horsepower touring car. When he smiles he resembles Harriman. He stalks along at the water's edge, licking his chops and eyeing me with the rapturous gloating leer of a beef-packer watching a Salome dance, the saliva dripping from his big teeth and when he roars he shows the red lining of his epiglottis. Not having the camera loaded, it is unfortunately impossible to get a snapshot of these interesting beasts. Anyway, they would be out of focus.

Steamer has vanished and we are alone as far as humanity is concerned. This coast is 2,000 miles long, and it's a scientific problem whether Tom Corker or the lions will quit first. They hang on like a railroad president to a rebate or a secret service man to

a member of congress! Any man who says the lion is a quitter is a liar.

The tide has turned and the current is too strong for Tom to pull against it, so we have been obliged to turn back. Lions showing renewed interest and hope, as evinced in more activity and appetite. I now feel keen regret in having wasted so much time studying the condition of the American farmer when I might have learned something about the private habits and proclivities of the king of beasts. These lions, in spite of the fact that this animal is supposed to be a nocturnal prowler, are sure-fire daylight performers, but they may have the pernicious activity of a poker-player and sit up with us all night, also!

8:35 P. M.—Sun just sinking. Small native boy suddenly appeared with a club and drove away the lions. When he saw us he became frightened and fled. Am now landing.



OOMPALAND, East Africa—A glorious country! Untrodden by the feet of the plutocrat or the proletariat in fact, nothing but the native acrobat and the Wombat has ever disturbed this majestic silence until we penetrated these wilds. The sense of solitude after dwelling for so many years in the proximity of two houses of congress is so soothing that one feels sleepy. The distant howl of the hyenas recalls the voice of Senator Aldrich at times, and the chattering of the many-hued parrots reminds me of a visiting delegation of the Woman's United Temperance association at the White House. All is as silent and tomblike as a Philadelphia Sunday.

We have spent the day in sorting over our outfit and putting things together. My typewriter was discovered to be out of order, and a close

inspection revealed the fact that it had been tampered with during the voyage, perhaps by some emissary of the magazine syndicate. The word-meter, which records the number of words at one dollar per word I write, showed a decidedly false reckoning, which would have reduced my pay several hundreds of dollars per day. It's lucky we discovered this before we penetrated into the deeper wilds beyond the reach of a repair shop. These native Uganda blacksmiths, according to the works of Livingstone, are expert tinkers and doubtless will mend the machine—otherwise the whole trip is off!

The folding bath-tub, from London was unpacked by Kermit, who thought it was a new sort of boat and was about to launch it on the crocodile-infested waters of Impiwee Creek. It was found to be leaking badly, and

the kid hesitated about taking a sail. Thus he is saved to us for a while, as an eager saurian which could not restrain its impatient appetite showed about six yards of his snout and scared Kermit up the bank.

The camera seems to be all right, but as we have not arranged the developing tent and dark room we cannot test it. The wireless outfit works bully. Sent a message to Taft in Washington and got a reply within six hours, and spent six hours trying to find out what it meant. Have tested all the guns.

From a cursory survey of our surroundings would say that game seems very scarce except a rather uncertain rumor of a crap game in Uganda. I have engaged the services of a husky district leader named Mbonga to round up a corps of bearers to carry our outfit. Mbonga is no mollycoddle. He

speaks English with a Timbuctoo accent, but as a sportsman or one who can follow up any known track he has Ernest Thompson Seton beaten to a frazzle. He was so anxious to enter my service that I was suspicious until I learned that he has twenty-one wives. I can't blame him for wanting to get away into the wilds.

Have just been held up by the alleged king of this section of the country. I now regret that I didn't make some arrangements with Cook's Tours before starting. This fellow, who says he is King Watabuga, arrived in an oldstyle-mobile with wooden wheels that need lubricating badly, and demanded fifteen quarts of cowrie shells for a hunting license. With him suddenly appeared a delegation of samples of all the animals in this section in charge of an animal tamer, who is an agent of Carl Hagenback,

and who seemed to have some difficulty in restraining his charges, although he assured us they were perfectly tame.

Under the circumstances thought it was more prudent and cheaper to pay this Ethiopian grafter than to put up a fight, although it is against my principles. After he had departed Mbonga told me that the king was a daring usurper who had cheated the real monarch out of his throne and was almost daily violating the constitution and by-laws of Oompaland, and also that he had formerly been a head waiter in an Atlantic City hotel. This explains how he learned the hold-up game!

Have just had our photographs taken in our African hunting togs. This was done, free of cost, to the Smithsonian Institution by the moving-picture man, who will accompany us until he gets material enough for a few dozen films, and he also offers to mount them for us when he gets back to Jersey City.



Still in Oompland, the start delayed by the difficulty of procuring gun-bearers until the drawing comes off of this month's policy game. Have to promise almost unlimited chicken and watermelon rations to each Ethiopian we engage. Had not the slightest idea how the civilized institutions had penetrated in to the Dark Continent, and I now realize what a cinch the early explorer had who could engage 300 burden-bearers for two ounces of snuff, a red cotton handkerchief and two glass beads each per month, and the native to find himself. Mbonga hints that perhaps the Brownsville affair somewhat hampers this matter and that I am in wrong with the natives to start with, but can't credit this, as they don't take the yellow newspapers here. Yet Foraker may have sent some of his speeches to this section!

Killed my first specimen at day-break this morning. It was a splendid tragetaphus, according to the

Hunters' Guide to Africa, although it certainly looks more like a podinkus as pictured in the works of Fred Selous.

Have just learned that I am not permitted to kill a tragetaphus as they are out of season! I can slaughter all the calotis, hippotragusses, topi, colobi, aardvarks, marabouts and hartebeests I want to, but nix on the tragetaphusses! This is somewhat disheartening, as I cannot possibly have the animals all labeled before I blaze away at them, and half the time I could no more see the labels than a South Jersey constable can see the license tag on a motor car passing through a "dry" country town! I am licensed to kill ten chevrotains but no okapis, but how can I tell an okapi from 'Chevrotain going at 37 miles an hour in a dust cloud?

Skinned the tragetaphus and billed the hide as "African lynx," and let it go at that.

Will never say another word about

nature fakers! This afternoon while rambling through the lonely forest preparing for an extended introduction to my first magazine article, I beheld a spectacle which will forever prevent me criticizing any statement of a rival naturalist! I came upon a troupe of performing simians who were doing stunts for their own amusement that would put Bostwick's show on the blink! That a gorilla could play leap-frog was utterly beyond my imagining, but I have seen them doing it for an hour, and took seven snapshots of the performance. Unfortunately, I had allowed Kermit to use most of my films in taking some pictures of me in shooting togs this noon, and thus I was prevented from photographing the simians playing foot ball with a large unhusked coconut a little later in the day. They played a simple but earnest game, striking the line with all the fervor of a scrub team from a country university and indulging in very little biting or scratching, and

evidently carefully observing all the rules. It was impossible to convey in words the emotions excited in my bosom by this surprising spectacle, and I now feel convinced that I will find in the Dark Continent many more startling evidences that animals do more than is set down in the works of naturalists. I feel some regrets that that I so hastily jacked up these other fellows who printed some tall yarns about the beasts, for I see that this yarn will be a stiff one to push past the editor of the "Century Magazine," who has been strongly influenced in the past by my remarks about nature fakers.

If a monk can play foot ball and leap-frog, why can't he be taught to carry guns and wait on the table? If the simian intellect is capable of such development, it is perhaps not impossible that in some future century we will talk about the gorilla vote or see them sitting in the African congress.

Is the heat getting on my brain? I think I will trek back to camp and see if the ice machine has been set up.

Saw a Bongo on my way back but it went too fast to shoot at. Will have the sportsman take up its trail in the morning.

Back to camp in time to get into some more moving pictures for a French concern that offers me extra large royalty.

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